



# NWSCHAT LIVE USER MANUAL

The screenshot displays the NWSCHAT LIVE web application interface. At the top, there's a header with the NOAA and National Weather Service logos, and the title "NWSCHAT LIVE USER MANUAL". Below this is a horizontal line.

The main interface is divided into several sections:

- Left Panel:** Contains "Actions" (Available), "Buddies" (a list of chat rooms like ARX Chat, DVN Chat, etc.), and "Chatroom Bookmarks".
- Map Panel:** A Google Map of the United States with various weather overlays. The map is titled "Google Map Panel" and "Map Valid: 6:35 PM". It shows precipitation (green/yellow/red areas) and other weather data. The map is powered by Google and includes a "Map data ©2012" notice.
- Layers Control:** A panel on the right side of the map showing various layers like "Base Layer", "Satellite", "GOES Water Vapor", "GOES13 East Visible", "GOES11 West Visible", "GOES Visible Composite", "GOES IR", "PrecipRADAR", "NMQ Q2 3 Day Precip", "NMQ Q2 2 Day Precip", "NMQ Q2 1 Day Precip", "NMQ Q2 1 Hour Precip", "NEXRAD Base Reflectivity", "NMQ Hybrid Scan Reflectivity", "No Overlay", "Chatroom Products", "Local Storm Reports", "Storm Based Warnings", "HPC Precipitation Forecasts", and "Day 1 QPF".
- Chat Window:** A central area showing a list of messages. The messages are from "nwsbot" and include information about reports, warnings, and forecasts. For example, "(4:51 PM) nwsbot: SHV: 2 Ne Coushatta [Red River Co, LA] broadcast media reports FUNNEL CLOUD at 04:45 PM CDT --", "(4:55 PM) nwsbot: PUB issues Summary Local Storm Report , 4 out of 4 reports were previously sent and not repeated here., view text summary", "(4:55 PM) nwsbot: PUB issues Summary Local Storm Report , 4 out of 4 reports were previously sent and not repeated here., view text summary", "(5:02 PM) nwsbot: MFR: 6 Sw Merlin [Josephine Co, OR] trained spotter reports HEAVY RAIN of M0.80 INCH at 11 Mar, 08:00 AM PDT -- 8 hour total", "(5:05 PM) nwsbot: SHV: 5 Sw Hemphill [Sabine Co, TX] law enforcement reports TSTM WND DMG at 03:00 PM CDT -- sheriffs office reported a tree down.", "(5:18 PM) nwsbot: SHV cancels Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Sabine [LA]", "(5:18 PM) nwsbot: SHV continues Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Natchitoches [LA] till 5:45 PM CDT", "(5:27 PM) nwsbot: SHV cancels Severe Thunderstorm Warning for Natchitoches [LA]", and "(5:58 PM) nwsbot: JSJ: 5 S Yabucoa [Amz735 Co, PR] public reports WATER SPOUT at 10 Mar, 06:09 PM AST --".
- Bottom Panel:** A "Chatrooms" section with a "Send" button.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

NWSChat Live is a web based client used to access the NOAA / National Weather Service NWSChat Instant Messaging/Chat system. This system is utilized by National Weather Service (NWS) operational personnel to share critical warning decision expertise and other types of significant weather information essential to the NWS's mission of saving lives and property. NWSChat Live is a supplement, and not a replacement, to access chat via other clients such as Pidgin and Adium. Both access methods will continue to be supported for the foreseeable future.

Since the NWSChat Live client is purely web-based, you do not need to install software in order to use it. It has been tested and works well with most common browsers on computers. The browser must have Javascript enabled. Due to differences in browsers for mobile devices, it may not work well, or at all, on tablets and smart phones.

## 2. QUICK START

The NWSChat Live client is accessed by the following URL: <https://nwschat.weather.gov/live/>

- a. Log into the system using your NWSChat username and password. Do not include @nwschat.weather.gov in your username.

NWSChat Live without Map'." data-bbox="247 434 636 570"/>

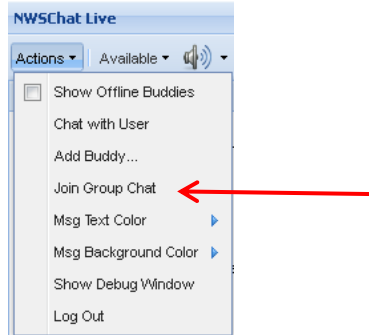
- b. Selecting **Browser Save Login** will enable you to save your username and password for future logins. The browser should respond with the following.

NWSChat Live!'." data-bbox="234 632 692 733"/>

Clicking the link should then return you to the login screen with your username and password saved and already filled in. You can then select **Login** to access the system with no further action. You are also welcome to manually enter the information each time and select **Login** to access the system.

Note: If you get a message stating "Sorry, login failed! Please try again..." then you have entered either an incorrect username or password, or both. If you have forgotten your password, you can reset it by going to <https://nwschat.weather.gov> and clicking the "Reset Password" link.

- c. Once you have logged in, under the NWSSChat Live menu, select **Actions...Join Group Chat**



- d. Join a chatroom. This is typically associated with your local NWS office, but could be others as well. The NWS forecast office chatroom names follow xxxchat nomenclature, with xxx being the three character ID of the forecast office. For example, the NWS Des Moines (DMX) room is dmxchat.

A screenshot of the 'Join a Group Chat' dialog box. It contains the following fields and options: Room Name (xxxchat), Chat Handle (WXYZ-Joe Smith), Save Bookmark for Chatroom? (checked), Bookmark Alias (optional) (XXX Chat), Anonymously Monitor (read-only) (unchecked), and Auto Join Room after Login (checked). At the bottom are 'Join Room' and 'Cancel' buttons.

The 'Chat Handle' field is how you would like to appear in the room. Please enter something descriptive of your name and position within your organization (Polk EM-Smith, WXYZ-Smith, etc). See Appendix A for examples on how to create an appropriate handle.

Select the **Save Bookmark for Chatroom?** check box. This will save all your entries in this GUI

and place it in the Chatroom Bookmarks column.

Your 'Bookmark Alias' is how you want the room to appear in that Chatroom Bookmarks list. Enter something that is easy for you to remember or recognize.

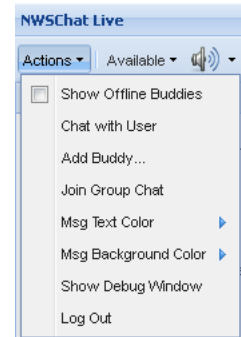
**Anonymously Monitor (read-only)** would be selected if you only want to monitor entries but not contribute to discussions, i.e. you can see the room conversations but you cannot type – chat in that room with this option. This is not recommended unless you are certain users within the NWS.

Selecting '**Auto Join Room after Login**' will automatically load the room whenever you login to the system via Live. This selection is highly recommended for your base NWS office rooms or other rooms you frequently join. You may join more than one chatroom at a time; each room is listed with a tab indicating the room name. See section, 5 CHAT WINDOW, for additional details.

### 3. NWSCHAT LIVE MENU

#### a. ACTIONS MENU

- i. **Show Offline Buddies** – Toggling this on will display all your Buddies whether they are logged onto the system or not. Toggling off will only show Buddies currently logged on
- ii. **Chat with User** – Initiate a private instant messaging session with a user
- iii. **Add Buddy** – Manually add Buddies to groups of your choice
- iv. **Join Group Chat** – See Quick Start instructions
- v. **Msg Text Color and Msg Text Background Color** – Adjustments to these colors will change how your posts display in all chatrooms and instant messaging sessions. It does not control how other posts appear.
- vi. **Show Debug Window** – This displays the NWSChat Live client log. Select the “Click to send this log to developer!” if errors, problems or bugs are noted.
- vii. **Log Out** – Logs user out of NWSChat Live



#### b. AVAILABLE (STATUS)

This changes your system status. The default is “Available”, but can also be changed to “Be Right Back” and “Away”.

#### c. SOUND

Clicking the speaker icon mutes and unmutes the sound. Selecting the arrow displays another GUI in which you can enable or disable sounds with individual events and adjust the volume. You can also configure the sound for each individual event by clicking the event’s Sound column entry and changing it via the pull down menu.

#### d. BUDDIES

This expandable column displays all of your buddies arranged by pre-existing groups. Click the + button to expand and – to collapse. This includes groups of your local NWS office, the NWSChat Admin Team, and possibly others.

#### e. CHATROOM BOOKMARKS

Once you join a group chat and select **Save Bookmark for Chatroom?**, the room will be saved in this column. Just click the room and then **Join Room** to enter. The + and – buttons work also work as mentioned above. To delete bookmarks, right click and choose Delete Bookmark.

## f. CHATROOMS

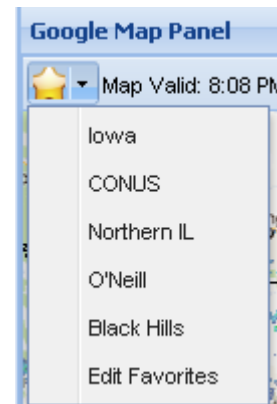
This is an alternate way to enter chatrooms as opposed to entering them manually. The column contains a list of most NWSChat rooms, but is not all inclusive. Some internal “NWS use only” rooms may not be displayed. To enter a particular room, click it, enter the fields as applicable and outlined in Quick Start section c.

## 4. GOOGLE MAP PANEL

This map area will display recent radar imagery as well as overlays of your choice as defined by the Layers Control column along the right hand side of the page. Storm Based Warnings and Local Storm Reports from the previous three hours will also display for whatever chatroom is currently active. For example if you have the WFO Des Moines, IA chatroom active (dmxchat) , warnings and storm reports will be plotted for that room. Multiple rooms can be active simultaneously.

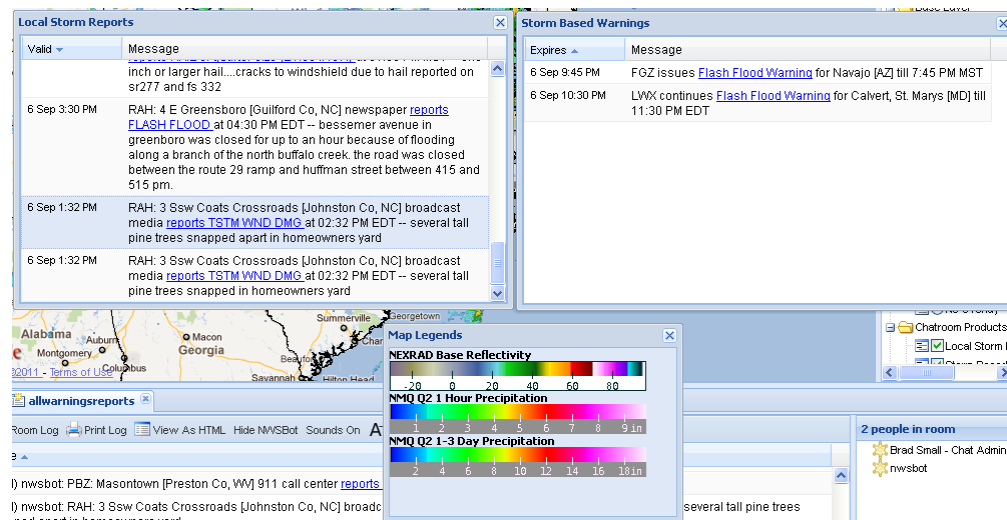
### a. MAP CONTROLS

This feature allows you to save up to five map presets. Setting #1 is the default and will be loaded when you log into the system. Clicking the star will also return you to this zoom setting. Selecting ‘**Edit Favorites**’ will allow you to change setting names and views.



### b. TOOLS

Selections in this menu will display separate windows noting Local Storm Reports (LSR Grid) and Storm Based Warnings (SBW Grid) for active chatrooms. Clicking individual storm reports or warnings re-centers the map on that particular product. Show Legend displays the Map Legends for NEXRAD radar data, NMQ Q2 1 hour and 1-3 day precipitation estimates.



### c. OPACITY

This slide bar controls the transparency of individual layers. The layer in question needs to be active and selected or highlighted in the Layers Control column.

### d. LAYERS CONTROL

These selections configure the following meteorological data or map backgrounds

- **Base Layer** – This can be a blank background or Google streets
- **Satellite** – Various images from Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites (GEOS) are available. More information on GOES imagery can be found [here](#).
- **Precip/Radar** – Imagery from the WSR-88D (NEXRAD) radar network is displayable as is data from the National Mosaic and Multi-Sensor QPE (NMQ) system. NMQ precipitation estimates are available for one hour as well as one, two and three day intervals. NEXRAD Base Reflectivity is available as is NMQ Hybrid Scan Reflectivity. More information on NMQ precipitation estimates can be found at <http://nmq.ou.edu>.
- **Chatroom Products** – Toggles for NWS Local Storm Reports and Storm Based Warnings. Storm Based Warnings include Tornado Warnings, Severe Thunderstorm Warnings and Flash Flood Warnings.
- **HPC Precipitation Forecasts** – These overlays include one, two and five day precipitation forecasts generated from the National Weather Service's [Hydrometeorological Prediction Center](#). These forecasts are considered as guidance only and may differ from your local NWS forecast office.
- **Storm Prediction Center Products** – Overlays include the [Storm Prediction Center](#) Convective Outlooks for the next three days.
- **Political Boundaries** –
  - **NWS WFO CWA** –Boundaries of local NWS Forecast Office areas of responsibility.
  - **NWS RFC HSA** – Boundaries of NWS River Forecast Centers.
  - **NWS CWSU** – Boundaries of NWS Center Weather Service Units (Aviation).

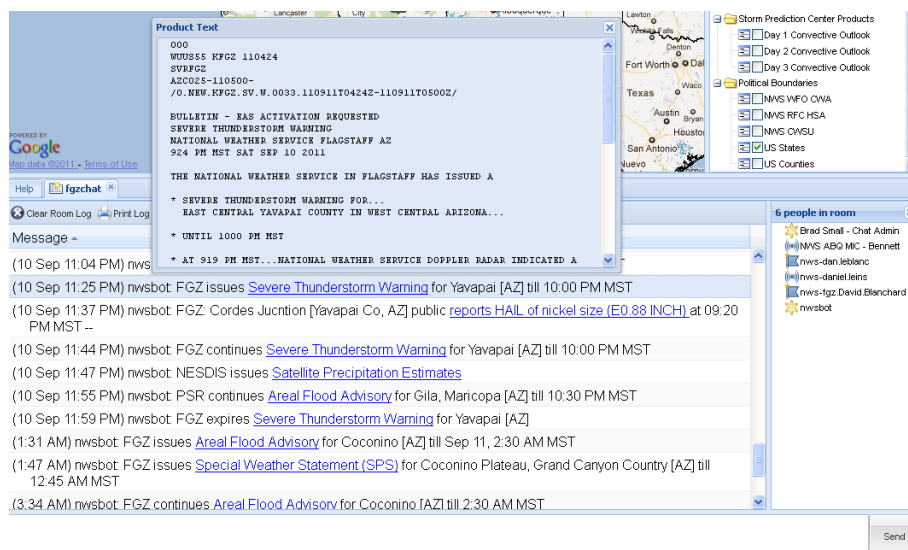
## 5. CHAT WINDOW

### a. CHAT WINDOW

The chat window at the bottom of the page includes all messages posted by NWS users and their partners for each chatroom which you have joined and any individual buddy conversations. Each chatroom and buddy conversation is listed in a separate tab in the chat window. Selecting a tab displays the window with the conversations for that particular room or buddy.

Note: Since you have the option to simultaneously join more than one room, you should ensure that the correct room tab is selected when chatting in a particular room.

NWS products are automatically posted into the appropriate rooms in real-time via the nwsbot, an automated computer generated “user”. Clicking an individual nwsbot entry will display a separate window with the exact text of the original message as show below.



## b. ALL CHATS

The “All Chats” tab shows conversations from every room joined by the user, all compiled in one pane. This enables users to see conversations from all active rooms without having to select individual tabs and room content (Figure 1). When transmitting messages, users can select which room(s) will receive the message allowing users to broadcast messages to one or more rooms simultaneously (Figure 2).

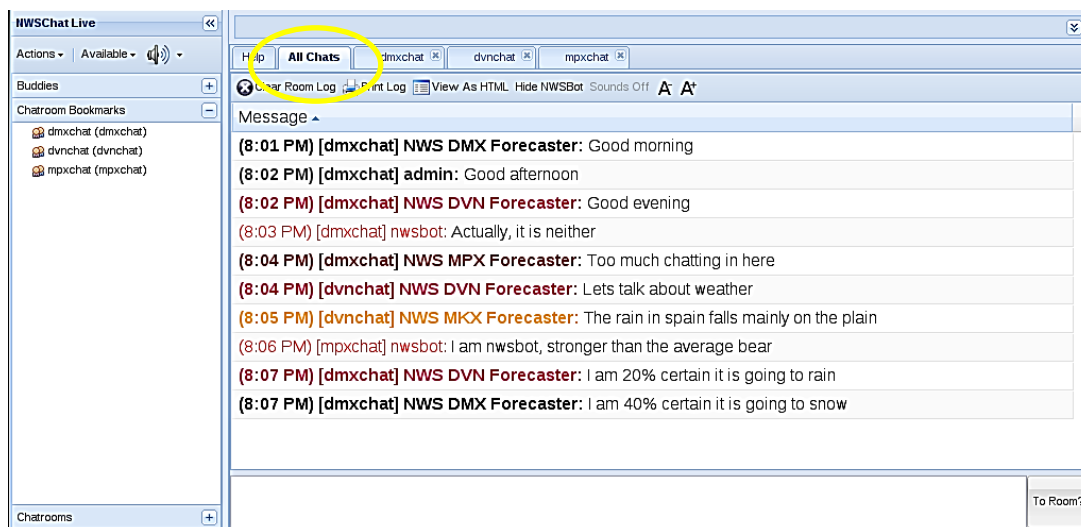


FIGURE 1

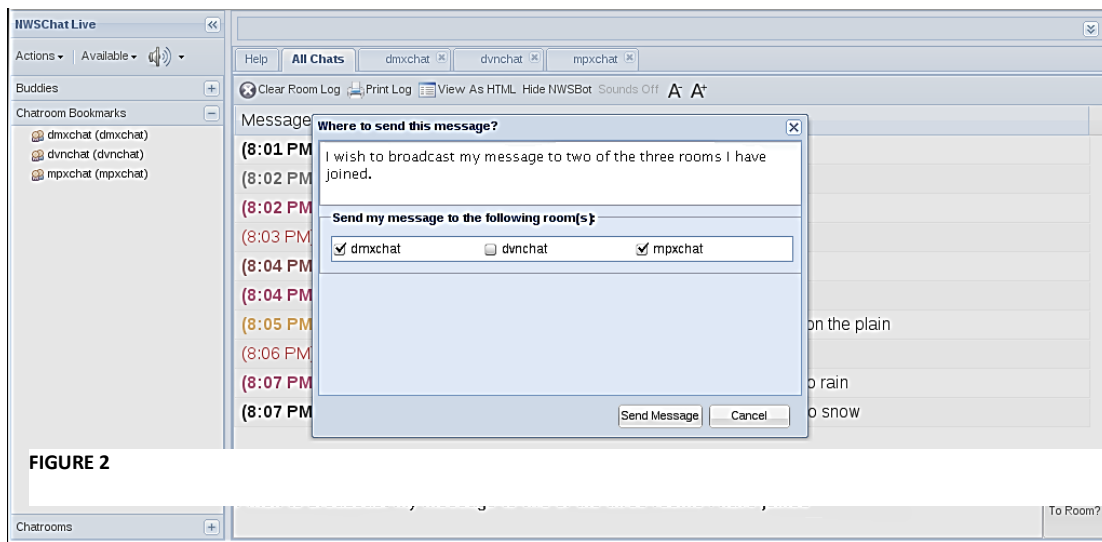
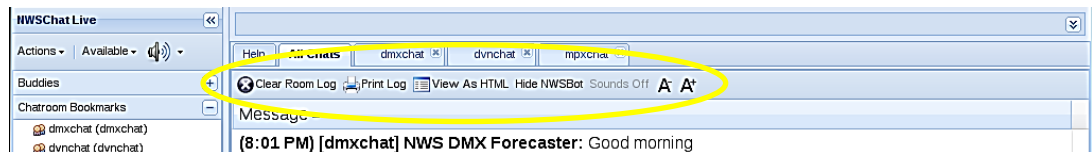


FIGURE 2

### C. OPTIONS

The NWSChat Live chat window includes several options allowing users to clear the rooms, print, view in HTML, hide NWSBot, configure sounds and changes font sizes.



The “**Clear Room Log**” functionality clears the contents of the room (as displayed on your screen, not in the actual room), “**Print Log**” which prints the log or room contents, “**View as HTML**” which allows you to view the room content as a HTML table, **Hide NWSBot** which precludes NWSBot from posting product messages, toggle **Sounds On** and Off, and **A-/A+** to decrease or increase font size.

Please see Appendix B: NWSChat Live Frequently Asked Questions for additional information.

## 6. SUPPORT

For additional questions on the operation of NWSChat Live or the NWSChat system as a whole, please email the NWSChat Admin Team at [nwschatadmin@noaa.gov](mailto:nwschatadmin@noaa.gov).

If persistent problems or bugs are noted with NWSChat Live, please run the application at the following URL...<https://nwschat.weather.gov/live/?devel>. Go to the **Actions** menu and then **Show Debug Window**. Once there, select **Click to send this log to developer!** An email to [nwschatadmin@noaa.gov](mailto:nwschatadmin@noaa.gov) noting your log file transmission and additional details of your problem would also be helpful.

## APPENDIX A: CHAT HANDLES

NWSChat participants are *strongly* encouraged to create handles which reflect their agency, station or position, in addition to their name. This provides users with clear, unambiguous information regarding room participants and their postings. One may assume everyone knows who you are based on name alone, but that is often not the case. Some examples and recommendations follow in the table below.

Partner	Example Handle
Emergency Management	Jefferson-AL-EM-Smith
Law Enforcement/Fire Department	La Salle Co Dispatch-Smith, Ottawa FD-Smith
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	FEMA-Region 7-Smith
United States Geological Survey (USGS)	USGS-IAWSC-Smith, USGS-OSW-Smith
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	COE-MVS-Smith, COE-MVD-Smith
Media Partners	WXYZ-ChiefMet-Smith, KLMN Radio-Smith
NWS Personnel	nwsdmx-smith, DMX Long Term, nwsncrfc-smith

## APPENDIX B: NWSCHAT LIVE FAQs

**Q. Will All Chats be available for other clients?**

A. We do not have the resources at this time to develop that capability for other clients (e.g. Pidgin).

**Q. Will NWSChat still work with other clients? Can I continue to use Pidgin?**

A. Yes. Other clients such as Pidgin will continue to work and can be used; however the All Chats feature works only in the Live client.

**Q. Will All Chats be available to all live users or only NWS users?**

A. The new tab will show up for all NWSChat Live users regardless of their affiliation.

**Q. Can partners use All Chats to send a message to more than one room?**

A. Yes, the "To Room?" feature is enabled for all live users.

**Q. Does All Chats include one-on-one (Chat with user) chats?**

A. No. All Chats only shows group chats (chat room) conversations.

**Q. Are "Members Only" (private) chat rooms included?**

A. Yes. If you join a private room, it is included in your All Chats pane.

**Q. If private rooms show up in my All Chats, won't non-members see the conversations in their All Chats tab?**

A. No. The All Chats tab is populated for each user only with conversations from chat rooms which they joined. A user who is not a member of a private room cannot join that private room; therefore they will not see the conversations from private rooms which they cannot join.

**Q. If I join a room anonymously, will conversations from that room show in All Chats, and can I send a message from All Chats to rooms which I joined anonymously?**

A. Conversations from anonymously joined rooms ARE included in the All Chats pane, however the anonymous rooms do not show up in the selections of rooms to include messages typed in the All Chats pane, therefore you cannot send a message from All Chats to rooms which you joined anonymously.

**Q. Can I exclude a room from All Chats?**

A. No, every room which you have joined (currently have an opened tab) is included.

**Q. Does All Chats include conversations from m 'ad-hoc' rooms created?**

A. Yes.

**Q. Can I close or opt-out of All Chats?**

A. No, the All Chats tab is always available and conversations from all joined rooms will be visible when the tab is selected. The user does not need to take any action to join All Chats.

**Q. Is there a limit to how many rooms I can join and have in All Chats at any one time?**

A. There is a practical limit of how many tabs one can see at a time, but no actual limit of rooms you can join.

**Q. Does All Chats work for both map and no-map versions of live?**

A. Yes.

**Q. I still have an unanswered question, who do I contact?**

A. Please feel free to contact [carlos.diaz@noaa.gov](mailto:carlos.diaz@noaa.gov) or [nwschatadmin@noaa.gov](mailto:nwschatadmin@noaa.gov). We will try to answer any question you have.